



THE INFLUENCE OF PERSON JOB FIT ON INNOVATIVE WORK BEHAVIOR THROUGH INTRINSIC MOTIVATION AND CREATIVE SELF-EFFICACY

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ABSTRACT

The primary purpose of this research has been to explore the influence of person-job fit on innovative work behavior using serial mediators (intrinsic motivation & creative self-efficacy). The research developed and tested the hypotheses on the basis of self-determination theory, social cognitive theory, and adaption–innovation theory. The research design was causal and explanatory, and this study gathered primary data from technical sales officers working in pesticide companies of Pakistan through questionnaires. The final sample has been 310 respondents serving in 22 pesticide companies which are operating all over Pakistan. AMOS was used for hypotheses testing based on structural equation modeling technique. The results showed that person-job fit significantly & positively influenced innovative work behavior directly and indirectly with intrinsic motivation and creative self-efficacy as serial mediators. Thus, it provides genuine contribution in testing mediating role of these mediators between person-job fit and innovative work behavior. This research provides invaluable guidelines for pesticide firms' management for the improvement of innovative work behavior in their organizations. Specifically, companies can encourage innovative work behavior by ensuring person-job fit in their HR process which would enhance intrinsic motivation and further creative self-efficacy of individuals thus leading to high innovative work behavior.

Keywords: Person-job fit, intrinsic motivation, innovative work behavior, creative self-efficacy, pesticide firms

JEL Codes: J28, C91

I. INTRODUCTION

In the present era, high competition, challenging work environment, and rapid technological changes demand continuous innovation and learning at all organizational levels. Organizations thus focus on innovative environment for creating and encouraging innovative work behavior (IWB) (Gligovic et al., 2021). IWB exhibits induction, creation, apprehension of innovative ideas, and the accomplishment of tasks creatively (De Jong & Den Hartog, 2010). Scholars have as well argued that IWB is developed better within the innovative environment of an organization (Shanker et al., 2017). Scholars argue that innovative work behavior is an employee's behavior which he adopts while working in an organization by bringing a novelty in planning, implementation, and assessment process during work (Guan et al., 2019; West & Gemmill, 2021). The technical sales officers (TSO) play vital roles in pesticide firms. They remain attached with top management of the firms and ultimate end users i.e. farmers. The problems faced by the farmers like crop diseases are one of the major challenges. It is not possible to resolve these issues without innovative role of TSOs in sense that they act as a conduit between farmers and pesticide companies. In this regard, the role of TSOs and their creative contribution are very important for solving crop problems and the development of agriculture in Pakistan.

Person-job fit (P-JF) is about matching employee characteristics and the job requirements (Goo, 2014; Woods, 2014). Person-job fit is the oldest type of person-environment fit and is mainly discussed along with literature on human resource management (Yu, 2016). In past, the focus of research has been more on person-organization fit rather than person-job fit. Nowadays, research on person job-fit is gradually increasing (Moulik & Giri, 2022). P-JF highlights the match between an employee's qualification, expertise, talent, and the job demands (Harzer, 2017). It is believed that high person-job fit would effectively develop intrinsic motivation among workers and enhance their creative self-efficacy (Hsu, 2012; Yulianti & Usman, 2019). Intrinsic motivation plays very important role to make

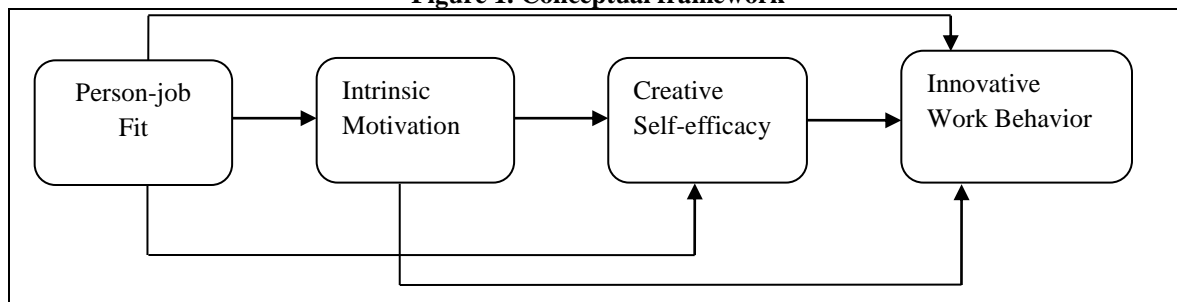
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the environment challenging for the workers. In this aspect of motivation, individuals show their genuine interest and novel ideas for obtaining the organization's objectives. Further, the capability of employees of a firm to get involved in creative tasks and produce innovative results for the firm is attributed and known as creative self-efficacy (CSE) (Tierney & Farmer, 2002) which is supposed to be one of the outcome of intrinsic worker motivation (Liang et al., 2013). The scholars commented that empowering leadership positively influences employee creativity with the mediation role of intrinsic motivation (Zhang & Bartol, 2010). In past, intrinsic motivation and job crafting have played the role of mediators between employee spirituality and performance (Moon et al., 2020). Other scholars in previous research have used the role of CSE as a mediator between transformational leadership and employee creativity. Employee creativity is also a type of innovation (Gu et al., 2017).

Researchers suggest that high person-job fit among the firm's workers promotes contentment towards their work. They feel intrinsically motivated, and such workers demonstrate high CSE and a high level of innovative work behavior (Afsar & Masood, 2018). Scholars argue that intrinsic motivation positively influences creative self-efficacy (Liang et al., 2013). Hence, scholars suggest a close relationship between CSE and motivation, particularly intrinsic motivation (Ali & Qazi, 2018). Numerous past studies have developed a deep understanding of different variables positively impacting innovative work behavior. In past, the impact of creative self-efficacy on innovative work behavior has been explored comparatively in numerous studies but the influence of person-job fit and intrinsic motivation on innovative work behavior have not been examined exhaustively and those studies have been limited. Hence, mainly this study's purpose has been testing an influence of person-job fit upon innovative work behavior through taking intrinsic motivation and creative self-efficacy as serial mediators for pesticide sector of Pakistan. In doing that, it tests all possible direct and indirect effects for all relationships presumed in the model. The conceptual framework is presented in figure 1 below.

Figure 1. Conceptual framework



II. THE REVIEW OF LITERATURE & HYPOTHESES DEVELOPMENT

II.I. THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN PERSON-JOB FIT AND INNOVATIVE WORK BEHAVIOR

Innovative work behavior refers to an employee's extra-role activity deviating from typical thinking and involving into new concepts (Huhtala & Parzefall, 2007). Person-job fit refers to the alignment of an employee's expertise, skills, and talents with job demands or organization's goals, as well as the relevant degree with the skills relevant to the jobs (Wong & Tetrick, 2017; Roussel et al., 2021; Sajid and Ali, 2018; Senturk and Ali, 2021). P-JF plays a vital part in determining that employees get involved in innovative work behavior (Anggraeni, 2021). Mostly, previous researchers examined the direct influence of person-organization fit on innovative work behavior, and very limited studies examined the influence of person-job fit upon IWB (Afsar, 2016; Akhtar et al., 2019; Tang et al., 2021). Adaption–innovation theory supports the association among person-job fit and innovative work behavior. The theory explains that the individuals' fitness for certain jobs and their willingness and adaptability for those jobs determines their innovative work behaviors towards solving problems (Afsar et al., 2015; Kirton, 1976 Ali and Audi, 2016; Ali and Audi, 2018). Thus, first hypothesis is developed as:

H1: Person-job fit influences innovative work behavior.

II.II. PJ FIT, INTRINSIC MOTIVATION, AND CREATIVE SELF-EFFICACY

Intrinsic motivation is an intellectual situation of mind and an employee gets joy in this situation of mind (Hai & Park, 2021). Creative self-efficacy is considered as fundamental source of creativity; it reflects a person's confidence in his ability in developing innovative ideas (Tierney & Farmer, 2002). Scholars have examined the mediating role of intrinsic motivation between empowering leadership and employee creativity in past (Zhang & Bartol, 2010). The scholars commented that empowering leadership positively influenced creativity with intrinsic motivation being the mediator. Further, intrinsic motivation and job crafting have been reported to have played the role of mediators

between employee spirituality and performance (Moon et al., 2020). Moreover, scholars tested the mediation effect of IM between person-job fit and job participation and suggested that creative self-efficacy should be added in position of dependent variable in the framework (Dari & Permana, 2018). Hence a gap exists in the literature concerning this. Furthermore, it will be interesting to evaluate the mediation role of intrinsic motivation between person-job fit and creative self-efficacy in pesticide companies working in Pakistan. Hence, following hypothesis is proposed.

H2: Intrinsic motivation mediates between person-job fit and creative self-efficacy.

II.III. INTRINSIC MOTIVATION, CREATIVE SELF-EFFICACY, AND INNOVATIVE WORK BEHAVIOR

An employee works more innovatively when he is intrinsically motivated and it helps create an innovative work environment (Chong & Gagné, 2019; Gagné & Deci, 2005). Mittal and Dhar (2015) examined creative self-efficacy's mediation impact on the association among transformational leadership and employee creativity in the Indian context. They found that CSE significantly mediates between the two. Certain scholars have used creative self-efficacy as mediating variable among leadership styles and creativity of employee. Gu et al. (2017) commented that the supervisory styles had a positive influence on intrinsic motivation as well as on creative self-efficacy. In the same study, parallel mediation was also tested and it was reported that that intrinsic motivation and creative self-efficacy played the role of parallel mediators between supervisory styles and creativity. Hence a gap exists in the literature regarding the test of mediating effect of CSE between intrinsic motivation and IWB in pesticide companies working in Pakistan. On that basis following hypothesis is proposed.

H3: Creative self-efficacy mediates between intrinsic motivation and innovative work behavior.

II.IV. SERIAL MEDIATING IMPACT OF IM AND CSE BETWEEN P-J FIT AND IWB

In this study, the impact of intrinsic motivation and creative self-efficacy are investigated as serial mediators between P-J Fit and IWB. In past, the influence of serial mediators including intrinsic motivation and creative self-efficacy was investigated between family socioeconomic status and creativity. The results revealed that they played a positive role being serial mediators between socioeconomic status and creativity (Yang et al., 2020). In the past, scholars also have investigated the mediation role of intrinsic motivation and creative self-efficacy between proactive personality and employee creativity. The result shows that intrinsic motivation and CSE partially mediates the relationship between proactive personality and employee creativity (Karimi et al., 2021). This research is novel in its design and pays a genuine contribution in testing the relationship between P-J Fit and IWB with the proposed serial mediation role of IM and CSE of technical sales officers working in pesticide companies in Pakistan. The hypothesis for the serial mediation is laid as:

H4: Intrinsic motivation and creative self-efficacy mediate between person-job fit and innovative work behavior.

III. METHODOLOGY

III.I. POPULATION, SAMPLING, DATA COLLECTION

A quantitative/causal/cross-sectional research design was used in this research. As noted earlier this study has mainly focused upon innovative work behavior of technical sales officers of pesticide firms in agriculture sector of Pakistan. Data was collected in different stages and mainly the respondents were approached personally. A list of pesticide firms was prepared who were operating in four provinces (Punjab, Sindh, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, and Baluchistan) of Pakistan. It revealed that a total of 713 pesticide firms are registered and working in Pakistan. In Punjab 391 companies, in Sindh 114 companies, in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa 125 companies, and in Baluchistan 83 pesticide companies are registered. But the data was collected from those 22 companies who were operating all over Pakistan in all the provinces. Hence, the rationale behind selecting these 22 firms was their country widespread and ensuring consistency and homogeneity in the sample. The selected 22 firms are registered under the protection plant department. The questionnaire was developed after an exhaustive study of literature, formal and informal interviews were conducted with the pesticide firm's management. All the items of selected variables of this research matched with the pesticide sector. The data were collected with the support of firms' management. Normally, corporate offices of pesticide firms call a monthly meeting. So with the help of management, the questionnaires were distributed among all respondents during those meetings. But the responses were very low from respondents. Approximately 50 to 60 members were there in a typical meeting. The researcher approached every member but 30 to 50 percent respondents replied. The final sample size for this study has been 310.

III.II. MEASURES

In this study, all the constructs were measured with the help of previous scales developed by scholars in the past. All items of the constructs were scored on a Likert scale (5-point); 01 was for "strongly disagree," 2 was used for "disagree," 3 was used for "neutral," 4 was used for "agree," and 5 was used for "strongly agree." The items for measuring P-J Fit were taken from work of Lauver and Kristof-Brown (2001) and Edwards (1996). This research used six items scale of intrinsic motivation that was developed by Vallerand, Fortier, and Guay (1997). A four-item scale was used to evaluate workers' CSE and was developed by Tierney and Farmer (2002). To evaluate the innovative work behavior of employees, a 10-item scale was used which was developed by De Jong and Den Hartog (2010).

IV. ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS

IV.I. DATA ANALYSIS

To make detailed analyses including the main test of serial mediation, SEM was employed in this study. Although there are numerous kinds of software for data analyses, but in this study, AMOS was selected as it was found very suitable for this research. Previous scholars also relied on this software for similar sort of analyses in the past (Karimi et al., 2021). The scholars argue that AMOS is recommended software for advanced sort of analyses especially in the field of social sciences; it is very suitable for testing hypotheses and where a causal relationship is presumed among the study's constructs (Afthanorhan, 2013).

IV.II. NORMALITY CHECK: TESTING DATA FOR SKEWNESS AND KURTOSIS

Before performing hypotheses testing in AMOS, data normality was checked with the help of skewness and kurtosis test. Scholars argue that the acceptable value of skewness is between -1 to +1, and the standard for Kurtosis value is between +3 to -3 (Celikoglu & Tirnakli, 2018). Both threshold standards should be met before conducting SEM (Jones, 1969; Önnér, Abdülrezzak, & Tutuş, 2020; Orcan, 2020). The statistics revealed that in this study all the constructs met the standards for skewness and kurtosis and had acceptable normality. The test of measurement model is discussed in the next section.

IV.III. MEASUREMENT MODEL

Figure 2 shows the measurement model drawn in this research. In the model (for confirmatory factor analysis), four variables (PJF, IM, CSE, and IWB) are placed with their items. The co-variances were drawn according to AMOS CFA model requirement. The analysis was done and the standardized values of all items are shown in figure 2.

Figure 2. AMOS output of the measurement model or CFA-Standardized

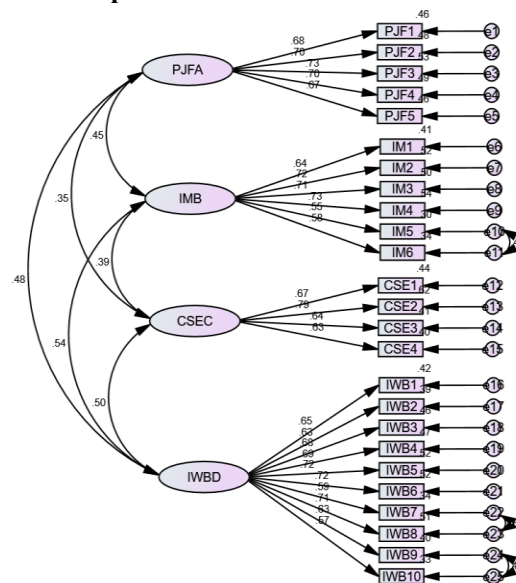


Table 1 shows the standardized items loading for confirmatory factor analysis. A total of 25 items of 04 constructs were examined in the confirmatory factor analysis. Previous scholars e.g. Pontes and Griffiths (2015) suggested that

no items should be removed with a loading greater than 0.5. Hence, no item was deleted. The loadings of all items are presented against each in table 1.

Table 1: Standardized Factors Loading

No	Title of Construct Items	Standardized Factor Loading	No	Title of Construct Items	Standardized Factor Loading
	Person- Job Fit		2	CSE2	.78
1	PJ1	.68	3	CSE3	.64
2	PJ2	.70	4	CSE4	.63
3	PJ3	.73		Innovative work Behaviour	
4	PJ4	.70	1	IWB1	.65
5	PJ5	.67	2	IWB2	.63
	Intrinsic Motivation		3	IWB3	.68
1	IM1	.64	4	IWB4	.69
2	IM2	.72	5	IWB5	.72
3	IM3	.71	6	IWB6	.72
4	IM4	.73	7	IWB7	.58
5	IM5	.55	8	IWB8	.71
6	IM6	.58	9	IWB9	.63
	Creative Self-Efficacy		10	IWB10	.67
1	CSE1	.67			

The fit indices for the measurement model were satisfactory. Upon running the measurement model, it showed that the value of CMIN was 1.93, TLI was 0.91, GFI was 0.87, AGFI was 0.85, CFI was 0.92, RAMSEA was 0.05, and the value of HOTLER was 184 (Shi et al., 2019). The above results show that all the values are meeting the set standards. Hence, the confirmatory factor analysis model was deemed fit.

IV.IV. CONSTRUCT VALIDITY

The construct validity provides a solid base for proving that the research process has been initiated based on strong theoretical and practical grounds. If quantitative research technique such as a survey or questionnaire is used, then testing the content validity and construct validity is vital and they must be studied. The role of divergent and convergent validity is very important to lead towards the rejection or acceptance of construct validity in a given study. Table 2 presents the concerned statistics.

Table 2: Validity Analysis

	CR	AVE	MSV	Max R(H)
PJFA	0.824	0.484	0.227	0.825
IMB	0.820	0.434	0.292	0.830
CSEC	0.778	0.469	0.250	0.792
IWBD	0.885	0.436	0.292	0.889

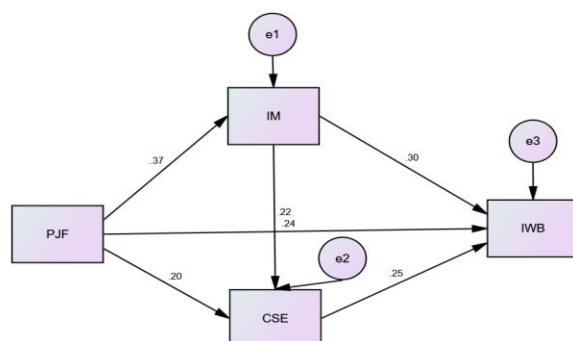
Average variance extracted was used to measure the convergent validity, and value of MSV was used for the checking the divergent validity. Table 2 shows that the value of AVE for person-job fit is 0.484, AVE for creative self-efficacy is 0.469, AVE for intrinsic motivation is 0.434, and AVE for innovative work behavior is 0.436. According to scholars (Fornell & Larcker, 1981; Janu et al., 2017; Rousseau et al., 2009) if AVE is less than 0.5 and has value between 0.3 to 0.4 it is acceptable on the condition that the variable has a CR value higher than 0.6. As per the results, all the values of AVE and CR are within the conditional threshold levels. Hence, the results are

acceptable and each item represents its latent construct. Further, the scholars recommend that the MSV values of constructs should be less than AVE values (Ghadi et al., 2012). If the values of MSV are less than AVE for the divergent validity it means all independent variables are significantly different from each other. Table 2 shows that MSV values of PJF, CSE, IM and IWB are less than AVE and are acceptable.

IV.V. STRUCTURAL EQUATION MODELING (SEM)

For conducting SEM, a structural model was drawn on the basis of conceptual framework Direct and indirect relationships with the help of arrows between independent variables, dependent and mediators are shown in the given figure 3.

Figure 3. The structural model showing impact of PJF on IWB through serial mediators



The mediation test was performed using Baron and Kenny (1986) method. The results of the direct relationships (direct effects) as well as the results of indirect relationships (indirect effects) are given in table 3.

Table 3: Direct Effects and Indirect Effects

IV	Mediator 1	Mediator 2	DV	Beta Value	P Value	Conf. Intervals Lower Bounds (5%)	Conf. Intervals Upper Bounds (95%)
PJ-F			IWB	.240	.000	.137	.348
PJ-F			IM	.368	.000	.249	.478
PJ-F			CSE	.204	.001	.081	.323
IM			CSE	.222	.000	.096	.349
IM			IWB	.299	.000	.183	.415
CSE			IWB	.248	.001	.136	.356
IM	CSE		IWB	.055	.000	.022	.104
PJ-F	IM		CSE	.082	.000	.034	.151
PJ-F	IM	CSE	IWB	.022	.000	.119	.247

Regarding H1, the table shows that the influence of PJ-F on IWB is significant (p-value: .000) and positive (beta: 0.240). Hence, it is concluded that improvements in PJ-F would be helpful in improving the IWB of TSOs in pesticide firms (Thus, H1 is accepted). The second hypothesis was about mediating role of IM between PJ-F and CSE. As Table 3 shows, the indirect effect of PJF on CSE was significant (p-value: .000) with beta value as .082. Therefore, H2 is accepted and it is concluded that if pesticide firms have high PJ-F it would bring about better intrinsic motivation among employees which would further help them improve their creative abilities and CSE. Further, this mediation is partial as direct impact of PJ-F on CSE was also found significant (beta: 0.204, p-value: 0.001). For testing hypothesis 3, the indirect effect of IM on IWB with the mediation role of CSE was checked. The results indicate that IM has a significant impact on IWB indirectly in the presence of CSE as a mediator; therefore H3 is accepted. The results revealed that value of beta was 0.055 and p-value was .000. Based on this, it can be

concluded that if TSOs of pesticide firms are intrinsically motivated it would enhance their CSE level which would be helpful to increase their IWB. This mediation was also found partial as direct impact of IM on IWB was also found significant (beta: 0.299, p-value: 0.000).

Lastly, for H4 the indirect impact of PJF was checked on IWB with the serial mediators (IM & CSE). The statistical results showed that value of beta was (.022) and p-value was found as .000. In light of this, it is concluded that PJ-F has a significant impact on IWB in presence of IM and CSE as serial mediators. So, H4 is accepted and it is reported that if there is high match between TSO's personal abilities and competences on one hand and the job nature and requirements on the other hand, it would provide them high intrinsic motivation which would help them develop their creative self-efficacies in a better way and would eventually enable them to develop creative work behavior while doing their jobs. For H4 as well, the mediation was partial as direct impact on PJ-F on IWB as significant as well as noted earlier. Moreover, the lower bound and upper bound for confidence intervals also point towards the significance of the results as shown in Table 3.

V. DISCUSSION, CONCLUSION, LIMITATIONS AND FUTURE RESEARCH

The main purpose of this research was to test the serial mediating roles of IM and CSE between P-J Fit and IWB. To accomplish this, four hypotheses were tested. The findings are discussed in next subsections one by one. First objective of this research was to examine the influence of P-J Fit on IWB. In the past, it remained a challenge for researchers to find out whether P-J Fit influenced IWB or not (Afsar et al., 2015). In 2017, Chen tested the moderating effect of person-job fit on service innovation behavior in the hotel industry in Taiwan. He reported that person-job fit significantly moderated the relationships between access to training/benefits of training and the service innovation behaviors. Further, in 2020 scholars (Suwanti & Udin, 2020) examined the impact of PJF on IWB in banking sector of Indonesia. The results showed that PJF of managers in the banking sector had a positive effect on IWB. This study reports positive and significant influence of P-J Fit on IWB of technical sales officers. This relationship has also been found significant in past research supporting various theoretical underpinnings (Luhglatno & Dwiatmadja, 2020). This research relates this relationship with adaption–innovation theory. The theory explains that an interaction among employees and their job choices defines their innovative work behaviors in problem solving (Afsar et al., 2015).

Intrinsic motivation is the most important aspect of employee behavior. It makes a cause of an employee failure or success in the firm (Klaeijesen et al., 2018). Intrinsic motivation as a mediator has served in different studies in different constructs (Feng et al., 2018; Han et al., 2021; Khalil & Zainuddin, 2015; Khan et al., 2020; Wang et al., 2020). The results in this study showed that the impact of technical sales officers' person-job fit on creative self-efficacy in the presence of an intrinsic motivation (as mediator) was significant. Self-determination theory supports the relation between PJ-F and intrinsic motivation. The theory argues about importance of autonomy, competency, and relatedness which must be satisfied for higher motivation. Better PJ-F would mean that an employee's values and characteristics are better matched with the nature of job and as a result employee would feel greater job relatedness. So, when employee would feel he is fit for a job, he will enjoy performing job related tasks and his intrinsic motivation would enable him perform better and productively (Ryan & Deci, 2020).

Next, the mediating influence of CSE between IM and IWB was tested. In many past researches, creative self-efficacy has been reported as a mediator (Akbari et al., 2021; Du et al., 2020; Fatoki, 2021; Liu et al., 2017; Puente-Diaz et al., 2020). However, a gap existed in the literature about the mediating influence of CSE between intrinsic motivation and innovative work behavior. This research has covered the gap and has examined the impact of IM on IWB with the mediator role of CSE in pesticide sector of Pakistan. This study argues that social cognitive theory supports the mediation role of CSE between the intrinsic motivation and innovation work behavior. Social cognitive theory emphasizes on an individual's self-efficacy in affecting his behavior (Bandura, 1997). The social cognitive theory explains that a worker's self-efficacy and intrinsic motivation motivate him toward doing something innovative and creative (Schunk & DiBenedetto, 2020). When a person has high confidence in his innovative abilities, his behavior during work is more innovative and creative. If a person is intrinsically motivated, his belief to perform his task in creative way increases; resultantly, his behavior becomes more innovative.

In earlier research, IM and CSE were not examined being serial mediators between P-J Fit and IWB. This study was conducted on the pesticide sector of Pakistan. The innovative work behavior of TSOs' in pesticide firms is very important for the improvement in pesticides and crop yields. In this sense, the last and foremost objective of this study was to examine a serial mediation case of IM and CSE between P-J Fit and IWB of technical sales officers in

pesticide firms. The results showed significant positive influence of P-J Fit on IWB in presence of serial mediators' namely intrinsic motivation and creative self-efficacy.

V.I. PRACTICAL IMPLICATIONS OF THE STUDY

This study gives a vital viewpoint for the managers of pesticide companies to make policies for human resource management in their firms. The study reports that person-job fit directly and indirectly influences innovative work behavior in the pesticide firms. In this perspective, it is a key point for the firms to improve innovative work behavior among their employees with the help of person-job fit criteria. TSOs' innovative work behavior will lead to growth in pesticide firms. When the work behavior of TSOs is innovative, they will work faster and more effectively to solve the problems of farmers in terms of crop diseases. Effective treatment of farmers' crops and diseases will help increase crop yields per acre and increase farmers' income. Increase in the income of farmers will help to raise their standard of living in society and ultimately the agricultural sector of Pakistan will prosper. Development in the agriculture sector of Pakistan will improve national income of the country.

V.II. LIMITATIONS AND FUTURE RECOMMENDATIONS OF RESEARCH

In this study, data was gathered from the business managers/technical sales officers of private pesticide firms and not from the individuals working in the public sector companies. In the future, the area of research can be enhanced for the government pesticide companies. But this addition will be more helpful in case if the data is taken from developed countries where the government's firms are working in competition with private firms. As it was not a funded research, so the sources for data collection were limited in this research. The data of only private pesticides firms has been gathered from the main corporate offices of the companies in Pakistan. The analysis results will become richer and more revealing if the data collection is done from other countries, but due to limited budget, it was not possible in this research.

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